




New York State
Department of Health
Bureau of Emergency Medical Services

POLICY STATEMENT

Supersedes/Updates:

No. 88-10

Date: 06/21/88

**Re: Use of 155.715 MHz
As A Common VHF
Frequency for EMS
Interagency/Disaster/
MCI Coordination
Communicaitons**

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**SUBJECT: Use of 155.715 MHz As A Common VHF Frequency For EMS
Interagency/Disaster/MCI Coordination Communications**

INTRODUCTION

To meet the growing need for a common channel Statewide that is reserved for EMS interagency communications and Multiple Casualty Incident (MCI)/Disaster Coordination, the following guidelines should be utilized for the frequency 155.715 megahertz (MHz).

The basic need for an Interagency/Disaster/MCI/Coordination (IDMC) channel that is common among EMS Providers and support agencies has been well-documented. Since the early to mid-1970s, the frequency 155.715 MHz has been recommended by the EMS Program as an appropriate channel for this application. To date more than 20 percent of New York's counties have licensed this channel through the FCC as a "Local Government" channel in order to provide IDMC capacity to their respective counties.

POLICY

Through the processes of frequency coordination, FCC allocation, interagency coordination of resources and new system licensing, frequency 155.715 MHz is intended to eventually be the Statewide EMS IDMC channel. To this end, the following guidelines are provided.

Licensing: 155.715 MHz is a local government frequency and may only be licensed to a governmental agency or entity. Each county should obtain a license for this frequency to cover its own EMS VHF channel monitoring and control points. The license should include sufficient mobile units for all ambulances and county public safety units with which ambulances may need to communicate in the event of a natural disaster or MCI.

Monitoring/Alerting: Each county's base station should be able to manually encode Dual Tone Multifrequency (DTMF or touch-tone) signaling to alert

other centers and bases. Additionally, each county should have at least one primary base station that can be alerted by decoding the 3 digit DTMF sequence assigned to that specific county or control center.

The codes for such alerting are published in the New York State Emergency Medical Services Radio Users' Guide and are assigned by the NYS Department of Health, EMS Program.

Subaudible Tones: Continuous Tone Coded Squelch Systems (CTCSS) shall not be used except where nuisance interference from adjacent states occurs. Such tones, where needed, are assigned by the New York State Department of Health EMS Program. All base stations should be DTMF encodable for alerting regardless of CTCSS status.

Channel Control: Channel control and monitoring is the responsibility of each licensee. Channel usage control may be assigned to a Regional Communications Control Center (CCC) where appropriate radio coverage is available. It should be remembered that the IDMC channel is RESERVED for EMERGENCY communications and is NOT to be used as a regular "radio traffic" channel.

Channel Usage: The IDMC channel may only be used at the direction of a designated CCC. Legitimate tests to insure system operability should be both allowed and encouraged within reason. Unit identification must be used for all communications and should consist of county/agency/identification number. The identification number may be a number determined by the licensee or its CCC.

State Agency Coordination: The IDMC frequency 155.715 MHz is compatible with and installed in both of the New York State Disaster Preparedness Commission's emergency communications vehicles, DPC-1 and DPC-2, which are operated by the New York State Police. In the event of a declared emergency using either of these mobile communications vehicles, 155.715 MHz may be used as the EMS local government to State Government interagency frequency.

The NYS Department of Health EMS Program is also licensed for 155.715 MHz which is used Statewide for emergency response monitoring/coordination and administrative activities.

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